

America's environment and natural resources are among our most precious assets. I believe we have an obligation to preserve them for future generations. Throughout my tenure in Congress, I have fought hard for legislation to protect endangered wildlife and critical wildlife habitat, to preserve our public lands, and to promote sustainable, science-based management of America's natural resources. Using my position on the Appropriations Committee, I have championed full funding for programs that work toward those ends.

Tackling Global Climate Change

For many years, one of my foremost legislative priorities has been to address the problem of global climate change. The overwhelming consensus of scientists is that climate change is real and that human activities are a major cause. For more on this issue, see my [Energy and Climate Change page](#).

Keeping America's Air and Water Clean

One of my environmental priorities is to keep the air we breathe and the water we drink clean. I support vigorous enforcement of the Clean Air Act and Clean Water Act to protect the public against industry pollution. These two landmark pieces of legislation have yielded enormous benefits over the past four decades, improving public health as well as environmental quality. I support efforts by the Environmental Protection Agency to keep industrial pollutants out of America's air, rivers, and drinking water.

Offshore Drilling

Like millions of Americans, I was horrified by the oil spill from [BP's Deepwater Horizon drilling rig in the Gulf of Mexico](#). I support lifting the oil spill liability cap to ensure that BP pays for the full cost of the oil spill clean-up, the restoration efforts, and the economic damages. Polluters should pay for their own messes; taxpayers should never be left on the hook for a private company's failure.

I have long opposed drilling in America's most environmentally sensitive lands and waters. I also favor halting deepwater drilling, since we now know that it is very difficult to cap a leaking well in deep ocean waters.

The oil spill in the Gulf provides a fresh reminder of the many costs associated with our nation's reliance on fossil fuels. In addition to creating the potential for catastrophic spills that pollute our oceans and coastlines, our reliance on oil is undermining our national security, polluting our air, and permanently altering the Earth's climate. America must move toward the use of clean and renewable energy.

Responsible Management of Public Lands

America must protect its extraordinary natural areas and create opportunities for responsible outdoor recreation. I support efforts to set aside spectacular and environmentally vital areas as wilderness, to be preserved for the enjoyment of future generations. The earth's great places should not be open for oil drilling, mining, or heedless development.

For example, I have long opposed oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR), which consists of 19 million acres of pristine land in northeast Alaska.

In 2009 and 2010, Congress made major strides toward protecting our extraordinary public lands, expanding trails and recreation facilities, and improving our National Parks. In 2009, President Obama signed the [Omnibus Public Land Management Act](#), which protects two million acres of wilderness and more than 1,000 miles of wild and scenic rivers, creates more than 5,000 miles of national trails, and establishes three new units of the National Park Service.

Also in 2009 and 2010, Congress approved substantial—and long overdue—increases in funding for America's National Parks and National Wildlife Refuges.

Land Conservation in Massachusetts

Closer to home, I have been a strong supporter of the [Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge](#). The Conte Refuge was established in 1997 to conserve the abundance and diversity of native plants and animals and their habitats in the Connecticut River watershed in Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Vermont. Throughout my tenure in Congress, I have helped the Conte Refuge secure millions of dollars to acquire additional land for conservation.

In 2009, I introduced and secured passage of two land conservation bills. The first is designation of the [Freedom's Way Heritage Area](#), which will assist with preservation efforts in 45 historically rich communities in Massachusetts and New Hampshire.

The second is the New England Scenic Trail Act which designates the Monadnock, Metacomb and Mattabesett (MMM) Trail System as the [New England National Scenic Trail](#). Scenic Trail designation qualifies the trail for federal funds for preservation and upkeep. The bill also extends the trail system roughly 30 miles to create a continuous span of protected trails stretching from Long Island Sound in the south to Mt. Monadnock in the north.

More information:

- I am a member of the [Sustainable Energy and Environment Coalition](#), the largest U.S. House caucus devoted to advancing clean energy innovation, halting climate change, and protecting our environment.

- [Explore America's Public Lands](#) – plan a trip to a National Park, National Wildlife Refuge, or Recreation Area.

- [MyEnvironment](#) – learn about environmental quality and pollution in your community.
- [Make Every Day Earth Day](#) – the Department of Energy's tips to save energy and protect the environment.
- [US Government Response to the Deepwater Catastrophe](#)
- [The National Park Service](#)